

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 17 April 2009 from the Permanent Representative
of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the
Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit a press statement on Somalia issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea on 10 April 2009 (see annex). This comprehensive statement articulates, in no uncertain terms, Eritrea's position on the disturbing situation in the sisterly country of Somalia.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Araya Desta
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 17 April 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Press statement

After 18 years of chaos and deception, the trajectory of Somalia's journey appears to be clearer than ever before. Yet, seemingly benign efforts aimed at disrupting the journey continue without let-up. It is therefore vital and timely to recoup and highlight the critical issues and dimensions of the problem.

For the last 18 years, external interferences and invasion on the one hand, and acts of warlords with narrow interests on the other, have rendered meaningless the *de facto* existence of a Somali State.

Eighteen years of vacuum has wreaked immeasurable devastation and suffering on the people of Somalia. Furthermore, this has been, and continues to constitute, one of the principal causes of instability in the Horn of Africa. It has not abated but rather seems to be aggravated with time.

The vacuum that has prevailed in Somalia for the last 18 years has created conducive grounds for the perpetration of piracy and banditry, and these phenomena are being misconstrued to provide suitable pretexts for external interference and to impede a genuine resolution.

In the event, the only viable solution is the reconstitution of Somalia by the Somalis themselves and the facilitation of an enabling environment for launching the process in earnest. All other alternatives, packaged under any mantle, will only corrode the potential opportunities and aggravate the complexity of the situation. And above all, they will not have any legitimacy for the following simple and clear reasons:

1. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, there exists only one, unitary, sovereign Somalia that has hoisted its flag. There is no other Somali entity. In the event, the United Nations and its Security Council have no moral or legal authority to recognize any other reality. The same applies to other international and regional organizations.
2. "Somaliland", "Puntland" and other "lands" may have emerged on the political landscape as a result of well-known causes and their obvious ramifications. Nonetheless, endorsement of the phenomena under the guise of stable "havens" and keeping the matter in limbo while preventing the Somali people from resolving it in a manner of their choosing will only perpetuate their suffering and exacerbate the chaos. The United Nations and the Security Council do not have the authority or responsibility to recognize and accept these dispersed "lands" outside, or against the will of, the Somali people.
3. It is the right of, and incumbent upon, the whole Somali people, to determine the issues of "Somaliland", "Puntland" or other lands by exercising their free will during the process of reconstitution or in its aftermath. This cannot be usurped by any other party.

4. Governments fabricated or installed externally under various labels of "transition" outside the due process of law and contrary to the wishes of the Somali people cannot be imbued with legitimacy and recognition as the duly constituted Government of a sovereign Somalia. Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that these schemes only hamper the opportunity for the people of Somalia to find early solutions besides aggravating the turmoil in the Horn of Africa region.
5. External interventions carried out under any name or pretext on behalf of illegitimate governments cannot have any legal foundation. Their primary objective is in fact to precipitate the fragmentation of Somalia and to forestall genuine efforts at finding a lasting solution. As such, they must be thwarted and deplored.
6. All schemes set in motion and/or conferences convened in the name of these illegal governments with the aim of legitimizing these illicit processes as "fait accompli" cannot be acceptable as they are devoid of any legality.

The people and Government of Eritrea do not have any other stance or policy that deviates from these basic legal considerations and concerns of regional security. Unless they harbour other ulterior motives, any other people or Government would not, for that matter, have a differing stance on this matter.

Attempts at portraying the position and policies of the people and Government of Eritrea as prompted by allegiance to certain individuals are deliberate acts of disinformation that do not merit serious rebuttal.

Moreover, groundless accusations of associating Eritrea with "terrorism" or as pursuing a "proxy war" emanate from the same base motives of stifling the voice and true stance of the people and Government of Eritrea.

Under the circumstances and especially at this crucial time, the Government of Eritrea urges the United Nations and its organs to desist from taking unwarranted measures that exacerbate and prolong the suffering of the Somali people, which maintain the existing vacuum and limbo, and which deepen the crisis in the Horn of Africa.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Asmara
10 April 2009